



UCLA POST-GRADUATE GUIDE TO

NAVIGATING THE JOB SEARCH

INSIDER TIPS FROM 2020 GRADS



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Welcome to "The Real World!"

Hello! We are two 2020 UCLA Geography Graduates. Neither of us knew where to start with the job search, and we figured that we were not the only seniors who found the job search challenging. After months of working on our job search skills, we eventually found sustainability-focused jobs in Washington, D.C.

This guide aims to take what we learned and map a way through the job search. We wish you all the best in your post-grad lives, and we hope that this guide helps!

Graduating from college means a lot of change. The change offers a great chance to learn and grow, but it can also confuse and overwhelm **new graduates**. It can feel like there are no options and endless options, or maybe somewhere in between.

To simplify the post-grad options,
most of the post-grad options fit within these categories:

1. Go back to school
2. Find a job

For this guide, we will focus on finding a job.

JOB SEARCH QUALMS THAT WE WILL COVER:

- HOW DO I FIND A JOB WHEN I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I WANT TO DO?
- WHAT IF I LIKED MY MAJOR BUT DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D LIKE FOR WORK?
- WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A JOB?
- WHERE DO I FIND A JOB?
- HOW DO I NETWORK?



Tips For Starting Your Job Search

1. If you don't know where to start on your job search, make limits for which jobs you apply to based on quality of life factors, like location, salary, benefits, etc.
2. Reach out to people via LinkedIn and other platforms to learn about their jobs and their paths.
3. Your first job is not your last job, so do not get paralyzed too much with figuring out what you want to do "for the rest of your career". You can make adjustments to your work any time in the future.
4. Make some simple boundaries for yourself to limit your job search. Having no boundaries for which jobs that you apply for often means applying to everything half-heartedly.

To make job search boundaries, think realistically about the living situation that you are comfortable with.

- Factor in life necessities (below, list subjective) and really consider if you would realistically be okay with accepting a position that offered less:
 - Health insurance
 - Enough money for groceries
 - Transportation costs
 - A safe and positive housing arrangement
 - Enough money to cover your financial priorities



Networking

Networking will not get you a job right away (usually), but it is a key component of the job search. Below are a list of benefits from networking:

1. Hearing about jobs and career paths: would you actually like those positions?
2. Honing your communication skills.
3. **Making genuine human connection during the job hunting process, which can feel inhuman and transactional.**
4. Making professional connections.
5. Finding new people to reach out to (i.e. a coworker of the person you are speaking with).
6. Getting advice for your job search and your first job.

Networking realities:

- a) While you likely will not get a job from one conversation, building your network will help you out in the future.
- b) You'll learn so much about the world of work.
- c) If you make networking insincere and approach it with cynicism, you'll give off a transactional vibe. It's a hard vibe to hide, and no one likes it.



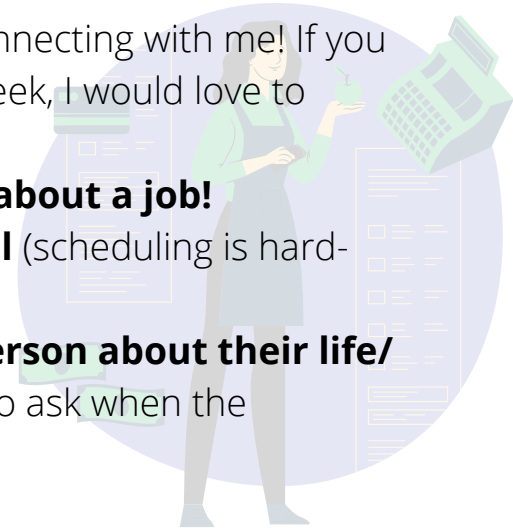
Networking: What Does it Look Like?

Networking can include speaking to completely new people, or speaking to people who you already know (and their connections). Letting your friends and family know that you are job searching and that you would appreciate any leads means that the people who know you best may help you out- and that can mean stronger networking opportunities. In this guide, we will focus on connecting with people who you do not know, as that process can feel more awkward than speaking with the people you already know. However, do not overlook the vital connections that you already have!

Below is a basic networking method to follow. NOTE: This method is highly subjective. We found that steps help break down a nebulous process like job searching, so use this as it helps you, and add and subtract whatever works for you.

We'll assume that you have access to LinkedIn and a resume.

1. **List 10+ companies that you'd like to work for.**
2. **Contact 10 people on LinkedIn/ via email per day.**
 - a. Contact 6 people with careers that interest you, and 4 recruiters at companies that you like.
3. **First message/ Email:** "Hi ____, my name is ____ and I am a recent UCLA graduate. I saw your profile and am also interested in _____. I would love to connect to learn more about your field!"
4. **If they accept, send:** "Hi, thank you so much for connecting with me! If you happen to have 15 free minutes this week or next week, I would love to schedule a call to hear more about your career."
5. **DO NOT MENTION A JOB unless they've posted about a job!**
6. **If they say yes to a call, give them 3 times to call** (scheduling is hard- you take that on as a courtesy) and set up a call.
7. **Prepare 5-6 open-ended questions to ask the person about their life/ career path.** Go with the flow, and have questions to ask when the conversation gets stale.



Networking: What it is NOT

It's not about being transactional.

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Networking Faux Pas

1. **Acting disinterested in the conversation until the topic of open positions/ what the other party can connect you with comes up.**
2. **Assuming that the conversation guarantees you a job.** The other party does not owe you a conversation, let alone a job.
3. **Not using the conversation to learn and connect with the other person.**
4. **Using pity to get you a job.**
 - Job searching is really hard, and everyone has different pressures and struggles when they do it. However, people help others who seem capable and not needy. So, put your best foot forward. It's not lying, just think of it as presenting your confident and happy self.



Simplified Job Search Steps

1. **Create your self-marketing tools. Self-marketing tools might include:**

- LinkedIn/ Resumes: We will not go over the specifics of making these tools in this guide, but you can start at the UCLA Career Center:
<https://career.ucla.edu/alumni/resumes-and-cover-letters>
- Personal Website/ Portfolio. These are not necessary to have, but either one makes you stand out.

2. **Make basic job-search guidelines for yourself.**

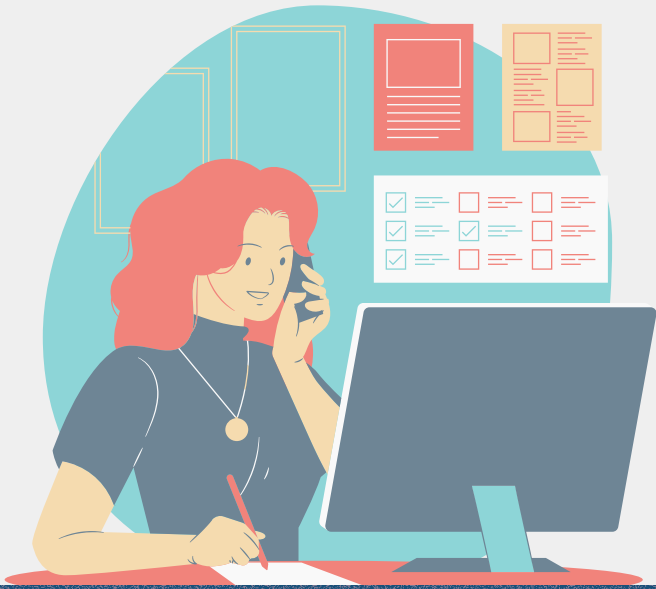
- What quality of life factors do you care about?
- What are a few problems in the world or in your world that you want to use your time to solve? Apply to those kinds of jobs!

3. **Network on LinkedIn**, at in-person events when possible, and call your personal connections.

4. **Apply to 1-3 jobs per weekday: well thought-out applications!**



Job Search Results: Lessons



1. **It's a matter of time.** If it takes you a year to find a job, that does not mean that "okay, I guess I'll never find a job since it's been a year". Instead, the job search includes a lot of luck and timing, so **you'll find something eventually as long as you keep on going!**

2. **Resume-spewing does not guarantee positive results.** Resume-spewing includes sending your resume out to jobs that you have no intention of accepting. Resume-spewing also includes putting your resume in a database. Sometimes a job interview can come from these databases, but the more common outcome is receiving spam emails and scam job offers. Your resume includes a lot of personal information, so be careful about where it lands on the internet.

3. **Just because you like to learn about a subject does NOT necessarily mean that the entry-level jobs available in that field reflect what you liked about your major.**

- A lot of entry-level jobs, regardless of the topics, are similar in nature: emails, small tasks, meetings. That's totally normal! You're new to working, so you won't usually get the big stuff.

4. **A lot of people will be willing to help you.** Accept their help graciously and pay it forward!

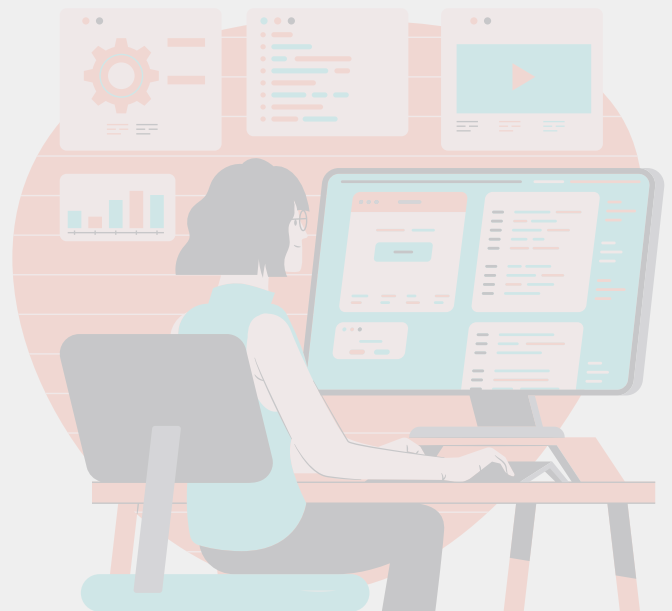




Tips to Stay Sane while Job Searching

Everyone is different, and the job search will pose different challenges for different people. Below are some ideas that might help you:

- Read books about tough characters to inspire you to work through your job search.
- Consider getting rid of social media if it makes you feel more stressed out or upset about the job search.
- Take a walk outside.
- Call family and friends for support.
- Take up weight-lifting or another fitness endeavor.
- Learn a new skill that you've always wanted to learn.
- Go on a peaceful drive.
- Learn how to cook a new dish.



Once you have a job, here are some things to prepare for:

- **Your first year (or more) of working may involve time spent settling into a new pattern of life.** That settling-in period can mean figuring out your finances, doctor appointments, insurance, apartment hunting, moving, and so much more. These basic elements of your new life take time to figure out, so have patience with yourself as you work through your early years outside of school.
- After graduation, **keep on learning.** You can learn from your boss, read books, take online classes, learn from your environment, and learn from mistakes and triumphs.
- **Making adult friends is totally doable. Focus on the "making" part: you have to actively find and create opportunities to meet people in your new area. One idea is to join clubs.** A club will usually mean that the group focuses on an activity, rather than only focusing on making friends. This dynamic gives allows conversations to revolve around the activity at hand, making it easier to start talking to new people.

Best of luck!

The End.

